43.

A FAITHFUL

ACCOUNT

OF THE

SICKNESS, DEATH, and BURIAL

OF

Capt. William Bedlow,

Who Dyed *Auguſt* the 20*th*, and was Buried *Auguſt* the 22*d*. 1680.

With many other Circumſtances thereunto Relating.

Taken from the Teſtimony of his Wife, and many other of his Friends who conſtantly attended him in his Sickneſs.

In a LETTER *from an Intelligent Perſon in* Briſtol, *to his Friend in* London.

SIR, *Briſtol Aug.* 23. 1680.

MY Obligations to your ſelf, and deſire of ſecuring Truth from the Out-rages of ill men, eſpecially when the Publick is concern'd, have prevail'd with me to give you a ſhort Account of the Sickneſs and Death of Captain *Bedlow*. On *Monday* the 9*th* day of this Inſtant, he came very ill from *London*, having the Head-ach, and an extreme Looſneſs moſt part of that day; the next day after he came home, he was ſeized with a moſt violent Vomiting and Looſneſs; Phyſicians were ſent for, who attended him two or three days; but his Diſtemper encreaſing, on *Thurſday* two other

Physicians were joyn'd in Consultation about him; his disease still grew upon him, and he being very apprehensive that it would issue in his Death, and understanding that the Lord Chief Justice *North* would be here to hold the Assizes the *16th* Instant, expressed a very great desire to speak with his Lordship for discharging of his Conscience, in deposing somewhat which he had not before disclosed; with which his Lordship being made acquainted, was pleased that night at his Request to go to him; before whom he did by many repeated Asseverations, upon the words of a dying man, declare, That in all the great business of the Plot he spoke nothing against any person upon Oath, or otherwise by way of Accusation, but what was true; and only complain'd that he had been too timerous, and rather lessened his Evidence in some particulars.

After some short time, the company were desired to withdraw; and none being left with him but the Lord Chief Justice, Captain *Bedlow*'s Wife, and the Judges Clerk; My Lord gave the said Mr. *Bedlow* his Oath, and his Clerk took a pretty long Deposition in Writing, the Contents whereof are yet secret; only thus far we know he made Oath, That whatsoever he had declared to the King and Council, and the Secret Committee, and at the several Tryals upon Oath, were all true, upon the word of a dying man. He told the Judg he expected no Crown of Martyrdom for Lying, as the *Papists* did, but what he said was sincerely true, as he was shortly to appear before the Great *Jehovah*, the Maker of all flesh, where he should stand with a clear Conscience as to all matters of the Plot, wherein he had given Evidence. He said moreover to the Judg: My Lord! some will not believe the Plot, or pretend it at least. My Lord! I speak the more, because I know not but that I may dye this night: He very often said to my Lord Chief Justice with great earnestness, My Lord! I pity the King! I pity the King! His Life is in danger! they will Poyson, or cut Him off! they are going towards it! they are Carrying on the Plot! the *Papists* will kill Him! When my Lord was going away, he called him back again, took him by the hand, and beg'd him to present his most humble Duty to the King, and to tell him he was His most Loyal and Dutiful Subject, and to beseech Him to take care of Himself.

Tuesday the *17th* of *August*, towards the evening, he appear'd worse than he had been all his sickness before; some about him asking

asking him ſeveral Queſtions about his Depoſition; he replyed, He was a very weak man, and would talk no more of Temporal things.

Wedneſday night he had a ſevere Fit, through the violence of which, he ſpake not for the ſpace of 14 hours, or thereabout. *Thurſday* in the evening his ſpeech returned to him, and he took ſome refreſhment, and asked thoſe about him what day of the Month it was? and what hour of the Day, exactly? One ſtanding by, asked him if he were ſatisfied in his Conſcience as to what he had ſworn and acted in the publick buſineſs he had been involved in? His Anſwer was, That as he hoped for Salvation, all that he had Sworn about the Plot was juſt and true, and that he had rather omitted, than augmented any thing he had given in Evidence. This he ſpoke the night before he dyed, and after he had been in a Trance ſeveral hours.

Friday the 20*th* of *Auguſt* Inſtant, his Speech failed him again, and returned no more; and about Two of the Clock that afternoon he expired.

Yeſterday being *Sunday*, after he had been publickly expoſed in *Merchant-Taylors* Hall, in this City, to the view of all ſpectators; his Corps was carried thence about Six of the Clock in the Evening, and buried in the *Mayors Chappel*, called the *Gaunts*; the Funeral was attended with a very numerous Company of Citizens, both Men and Women. Mr. Mayor, and others of the beſt Quality being preſent, ſeveral Gentlemen of the Council, and others bearing up the Pall. The Church was hung with black. Mr. *Palmer*, a Reverend and Learned Divine of this City, Preached an excellent Sermon at his Funeral, on *Rom.* 14. *v.* 12, 13. *So then every one of us ſhall give an account of himſelf to God. Let us not therefore judg one another any more, but judg this rather, that no man put a ſtumbling-block, or an occaſion to fall in his brothers way.* There were Eſcutcheons fixed to the Hearſe, with this Inſcription in black Letters in a Field-Argent:

Teſtimonium quod vivens Exhibuit
Moriens conſtanter Obſirmavit!

Thus you have a plain and juſt Relation of the Death and Burial of Captain *William Bedlow*. The loſs of ſo conſiderable an Evidence to the King and Kingdom is greatly to be deplored:

plored: But if you revolve seriously upon the manner of his Death, and his exact temper and deportment through the whole series of his sickness, you'l find reason to believe, that *Sampson*-like he hath Triumph'd even in Death, over the Popish Conspirators, and been as formidable in his sick-bed, as formerly in the Courts of Justice; the strong Asseverations he left behind him in vindication of his Evidence, hath rais'd it to the highest Reputation. It seemeth to me, as if Providence found it necessary in this stubborn and unbelieving age, to use extraordinary methods to evince the World of the truth of the Bloody and Hellish Plot. And therefore to the clear and uncontroulable Evidence that hath been given *viva voce*, and by Original Letters under the Conspirators own hands, God hath now superadded one Argument more to convince us, by making one of the Witnesses seal the discovery with his last breath, and dye, giving repeated Evidence against the Plot. I am,

SIR,

Your humble Servant,

T. S.

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